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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

PART IV. THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

Section 9 - Southern South America

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-03344

IV.9 SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICA

1. This chapter covers UNHCR activities in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

Area Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

2. At 31 December 1993, southern South America hosted a refugee population of some 19,700 persons, of whom 3,229 were assisted by UNHCR. The majority (12,698) are of Latin American origin, followed by Europeans (3,396), Africans (1,692), refugees from Asia and the Middle East (1,890), and stateless persons (three). Most of the refugees are of urban origin.

3. The number of Latin American asylum-seekers has continued to decrease with the restoration of democratic government throughout the region. Peru has proved to be the exception, with internal violence and extreme economic difficulties having caused internal and external population movements. The report of the Andean Commission of Jurists cited an estimate given by the Technical Commission on the Problem of Displaced Peoples, of 400,000 internally displaced persons in Peru in 1992. Of a total of 485 new Peruvian arrivals in the region in 1993, Bolivia registered the highest number, followed by Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil.

4. In 1993, Africans, mainly from Angola, Zaire and Liberia, continued to arrive. Brazil hosts the largest number of African refugees, and receives an average of 100 new arrivals per month.

5. In most countries, there is a small number of elderly Europeans who because of their age are unable to participate in income-generating activities.

Programme objectives and priorities

6. The UNHCR Regional Office for southern South America has established 1994 and 1995 objectives as follows:

African refugees

7. Particular attention will be given to African refugees in Brazil in view of their large numbers and constant inflow, and will focus on counselling, vocational training, job placement and other activities to enhance refugee self-sufficiency, thereby reducing long-term dependency and facilitating local integration.

Latin American refugees

8. In view of the respective asylum policies of countries in the region, local integration efforts have encountered difficulties. UNHCR will continue to seek long-term solutions, and, in the meantime, provide short-term assistance where possible to both asylum-seekers and refugees.

9. The steady flow of Peruvian asylum-seekers and increasing requests for family reunification due to internal violence in Peru have merited close attention in the past year. UNHCR will continue to monitor the situation in coordination with other United Nations agencies.

10. The application of the Cessation Clauses to refugees from Chile in March 1994 may lead to an increase in the number of repatriations over the year. UNHCR will continue to ensure the protection of returnees, as well as to promote their local integration.

Implementing legislation and promotion of refugee law

11. All the countries in the region are parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. UNHCR will continue to promote the implementation of adequate national legislation in accordance with the principles of international protection, particularly in Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay.

Institutional Contacts to Reinforce Refugee Policy

12. Constant dialogue with Governments, implementing partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is of primary importance to UNHCR activities in the region. Training and seminars addressing different aspects of refugee problems are planned, so as to reinforce coordination.

Resettlement

13. Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay have shown an interest in receiving refugees and migrants for resettlement in their countries. UNHCR will closely follow these initiatives which may open further resettlement possibilities.

Programme delivery and administrative support costs

14. UNHCR maintains a Regional Office in Argentina and Sub-Offices in Chile and Brazil. Scaling down of this presence has been delayed due to the influx of African refugees in Brazil and the final phase of repatriations to Chile. While the Sub-Office in Chile is now expected to close by the end of 1995, UNHCR is reinforcing its presence in Brazil to address the needs of the current refugee population and of new arrivals.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

15. UNHCR carries out its assistance programmes throughout the region in collaboration with a network of voluntary agencies and in close cooperation with government counterparts.

16. Counselling and assistance to refugees is provided through specialized agencies with extensive experience in migration and refugee-related issues: Comisión Católica Argentina de Migraciones in Argentina; Centro de Estudios y Servicios Especializados sobre Migraciones Involuntarias in Bolivia; "Caritas Arquidiocesana" in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo in Brazil; Instituto Católico de Migraciones in Chile; Comité de Iglesias para Ayuda de Emergencia in Paraguay; Comisión Católica Peruana de Migración in Peru; and Organización para la

Protección y Asistencia al Refugiado in Uruguay. These agencies also collaborate in eligibility determination procedures by interviewing asylum-seekers.

17. The Tolstoy Foundation provides assistance for elderly European refugees in the region. In countries where there is no UNHCR office, the implementing partner assumes responsibility for refugee-related issues under the supervision of UNHCR, through regular missions from the Regional Office.

18. Repatriation activities are implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Fundación de Ayuda al Retorno provides assistance to Chilean returnees.

General Programmes

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

19. In 1993 the refugee population in the region increased and diversified significantly. African asylum-seekers arrived primarily in Brazil but also, to a lesser extent, in Argentina and Uruguay. The assisted refugee population in Brazil grew from 310 to 1,757 during the year, necessitating adjustments to the programme to address their needs. A joint UNHCR technical mission recommended several measures to assist in local integration; these began to be implemented towards the end of the year.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

20. In Brazil, assistance continues to focus on the local integration of documented refugees. Vocational training, job placement and labour pool schemes are planned to promote this objective. Other possibilities include the settlement of refugees to areas with greater job opportunities. An inter-ministerial agreement was signed in Rio de Janeiro in May, whereby various ministries have committed themselves to take part in the local integration programme.

21. Local integration in Argentina will also place increased emphasis on the job placement of recognized refugees. Care and maintenance assistance in Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay follows a direction similar to previous years, with particular attention paid to the education sector.

22. Voluntary repatriation of refugees from the region will continue in the course of the year. It is expected that the number of repatriations to Chile will rise significantly as a result of the application of the Cessation Clauses, and $ 160,000 have been made available from the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation to cover the initial programme costs for the reintegration of returnees.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

Care and maintenance

23. In Brazil, refugees and asylum-seekers will receive care and maintenance and legal assistance, with an orientation towards self-sufficiency. Emphasis will continue to be placed on the implementation of activities which will permit access to the labour market, such as individual job placement, organization of labour pools, vocational training and small business projects. In 1995, the programme will include special activities for disadvantaged refugees, such as literacy training, Portuguese courses, and basic skills training, in order to maximize possibilities for refugees to become self-sufficient.

24. While basic assistance will continue in Bolivia, Chile and Uruguay, programmes will be further oriented towards local integration.

Voluntary repatriation

25. Voluntary repatriation to Chile under UNHCR auspices will be terminated by the end of August 1995, in accordance with the Cessation Clauses. Henceforth, it is expected that the number of Chilean repatriations will significantly decrease, and funds will be required primarily for the repatriation of Lao nationals and Africans.

Local settlement

26. The Local Settlement project in Argentina continues to follow the direction of the previous year. Vocational training, individual job placement and small business projects are planned in order to enhance refugees' local integration possibilities. Efforts to simplify the documentation process will continue through negotiations with local authorities.

Resettlement

27. Increasing requests for family reunification due to the complex internal situation in Peru, which continues to give rise to a steady flow of refugees, will be supported by UNHCR through its resettlement project, which is centralized at Headquarters.

Special Programmes

Returnee programme

28. The reintegration project in Chile under the tripartite agreement between the Chilean National Office of Return, IOM and UNHCR assisted a greater number of returnees (1,945 Chileans) than originally expected in 1993. The project covered not only the issuance of basic legal documentation, but also legal assistance, as needed. Adequate funding will continue to be sought for these activities, particularly since the population is likely to increase in 1994 and the need will continue in 1995 as a result of the application of the Cessation Clauses.

Education Account

25. In 1993, a total of 99 refugees were assisted throughout the region to pursue post-secondary, vocational and university level studies to improve their chances of achieving self-sufficiency. The amount allocated for this purpose in 1994 is similar. In 1995 the proposed allocation has been increased to cover additional refugees in Brazil.

Other Trust Funds

26. In 1993, the German Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) programme for assistance to higher education aided 74 beneficiaries throughout the region. In 1994 this project has been extended to benefit ten refugees in Brazil and to assist an expected 62 returnees in Chile. It forms an important part of local integration efforts aimed at increasing employment possibilities for refugees.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities for 1993**

27. Programme delivery and administrative support costs for the region in 1993 were considerably lower than revised estimates. In Brazil, provisions made for additional operating expenses to support activities related to the influx of African refugees were not utilized. As planned, a post of Programme Assistant was created in Argentina in July 1993, and one Junior Professional Officer post was discontinued in Chile at the end of April 1993.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

28. Given the continuing influx of Angolan and Zairian refugees in Brazil, the 1994 estimate for the region has been revised upwards. A Programme Officer, Administrative Assistant and a Secretary were added in Brazil as of mid-year, and the administrative budget for this office has also been increased to provide necessary equipment and supplies in support of these activities.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

29. Initial 1995 estimates for programme delivery and administrative support costs in the region are slightly higher than 1994 revised estimates due to the budgeting for posts created in Brazil for a full year in the middle of 1994, as well as continuing needs related to the African caseload.

30. Posts throughout the region have been extended through 1995. The office in Chile is expected to close at the end of the year as the repatriation of Chileans following the application of the Cessation Clauses comes to an end. Therefore, the three posts in this office will be discontinued in December 1995.

31. In Argentina, costs are expected to remain at levels similar to 1994 revised estimates, in support of activities throughout the region.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994			1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED By 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION		SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
			GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)		
				CARE AND MAINTENANCE	
166.9	152.4	166.2	Bolivia		196.4
665.2 b/	550.0	900.5	Brazil		1,031.7
193.5 c/	215.0	107.5	Chile		124.8
13.4	13.4	13.4	Paraguay		21.1
100.0	89.3	89.3	Uruguay		100.0
154.6	70.4	70.4	Peru		85.2
20.7 a/	–	–	Argentina		–
				VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	
114.0	160.1	160.1	Argentina		160.2
31.5	30.0	30.0	Regional Project		30.0
–	–	160.0 e/	Chile		–
				LOCAL SETTLEMENT	
770.6 d/	729.4	486.1	Argentina		435.7
2.0 a/	–	–	Brazil		–
6.1 a/	–	–	Chile		–
				RESETTLEMENT	
5.0 a/	–	–	Argentina		–
41.8 a/	–	–	Peru		–
10.8 a/	–	–	Chile		–
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY	
–	–	873.1	Argentina	See Annexes I a and II a	876.6
–	–	398.0	Brazil	See Annexes I a and II a	356.3
–	–	207.6	Chile	See Annexes I a and II a	178.4
–	–	48.6	Training	See Annexes I a and II a	48.6
2,296.1	2,010.0	3,710.8		SUB–TOTAL OPERATIONS	3,645.0
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	
602.7	651.3	224.4	Argentina	See Annexes I b and II b	213.0
256.7	260.4	74.6	Brazil	See Annexes I b and II b	83.2
108.1	196.0	59.3	Chile	See Annexes I b and II b	62.8
199.2	273.2	232.6	Training	See Annexes I b and II b	232.6
3,462.8	**3,390.9**	**4,301.7**		**TOTAL (1)**	**4,236.6**
			SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)		
				EDUCATION ACCOUNT	
14.2	17.5	17.5	Argentina	20 university scholarships	17.5
24.9	25.0	25.0	Brazil	40 university scholarships	59.2
85.8	85.8	85.8	Peru, Bolivia and Uruguay	62 university scholarships	86.0
				OTHER TRUST FUNDS	
16.4	37.0	8.0	Chile	Assistance to returnees in Chile	–
–	–	497.1	Regional Project		–
272.2	–	–	Argentina		–
35.3	–	–	Brazil		–
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY	
–	–	67.9	Training	See Annexes I a and II a	67.9
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	
65.9	92.1	23.0	Argentina	See Annexes I b and II b	32.0
10.5	22.8	–	Chile	See Annexes I b and II b	–
525.2	**280.2**	**724.3**		**TOTAL (2)**	**262.6**
3,988.0	**3,671.1**	**5,026.0**		**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**4,499.2**

a/ obligation incurred against Overall Allocation
b/ of which US$ 2,218 incurred against Overall Allocation
c/ of which US$ 2,204 incurred against Overall Allocation
d/ of which US$ 19,377 incurred against Overall Allocation
e/ allocated from the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation